

## HANSCOM AREA TOWNS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING

Held at 7:30 PM on December 18, 2008

At Lincoln Town Offices

#### PRESENT:

Sara Mattes	Lincoln Board of Selectmen (Chair)
Jeanne Krieger	Lexington Board of Selectmen
Anne Shapiro	Concord Board of Selectmen
Mike Rosenberg	Bedford Board of Selectmen
Lisa Mustapich	Bedford Planning Board
Richard Canale	Lexington Planning Board; MAGIC
Margaret Coppe	Lexington
Robert Domnitz	Lincoln Planning Board
Mark Whitehead	Lincoln Town Planner
Lou Sideris	Minuteman National Historic Park
Sara Arnold	Massport Hanscom
Dorothy Steele	Massport/ OGCA
Sue Felshin	West Concord Task Force
Catherine Perry	Lincoln Planning (minutes)

#### 7:30 PM INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda. She explained that the main item for the meeting is a discussion of parking and its role in managing change.

#### 7:35 PM ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting will be on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the workshop topic will be youth services, recreation and the role of local government in these areas. Mike Rosenberg will coordinate the discussion.

#### 7:40 PM WORKSHOP: PARKING

Robert Domnitz, Chairman of the Lincoln Planning Board, led the workshop. He distributed copies of a discussion note organized under five headings: village centers; office buildings and office parks; parking for mass transit; shopping centers; and isolated neighborhood business clusters. Mr. Domnitz noted that the four HATS towns seem different but some of the differences may be because they are at different stages of evolution in their development. Discussion was lively and included the following points.

##### Village Centers

The balance between municipal and private responsibility for parking was discussed. Concord has three commercial village centers: the main center, Thoreau Street around Concord station, and West Concord. The main center has two town-owned lots. The prime issues here are proximity, and employee versus customer parking. A management plan and the possibility of satellite parking at busy times have been discussed. Only on-street parking spaces are metered. Sue Felshin reported that in West Concord the main parking issue is that parking areas are hidden or hard to access.

Mr. Domnitz noted that when towns set parking standards in their zoning, most existing businesses will be non-conforming, which may constrain their development. Parking ratios were discussed. Lincoln's ratio is high and often sends applicants in to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Catherine Perry pointed to a copy of the MAPC 2009 calendar which includes a map of parking ratios by town; there is wide variation but several suburban towns have high ratios. Lexington commented that businesses sometimes make arrangements to use off-site spaces and that this causes complications with the counting of spaces. Bedford has encountered similar complications with dual use of spaces. Lexington has an attended parking lot that maximizes use of the available land and helps to offset the scarcity of private spaces.

The group discussed whether towns sometimes use parking as a tool to control the intensity or type of development, rather than dimensional and use controls. Jeanne Krieger mentioned that a UCLA professor argues that off-street parking should be limited and charged for. Mike Rosenberg commented that, if a town is aiming to protect its town centers, such a policy may be counterproductive.

Some towns receive complaints about inadequate parking when, really, the issue may be proximity. There seems to be a different perception of distance in local centers compared to large mall developments.

Different types of centers were discussed. Bedford's centers are 1950s-style shopping centers or strip malls, rather than "traditional centers." A renovation is planned for the center that is based around Whole Foods and Marshalls. The new center will incorporate outdoor seating and landscaping, but currently no housing is proposed, and public transportation is limited. West Concord is believed to attract people who wish to live close to services. Lexington and Bedford feel that they have lost diversity in their retail stores, in favor of banks and coffee shops.

#### Office Buildings and Office Parks

Mr. Domnitz asked whether towns have any policies to limit traffic demand. Lexington has a policy that requires developers to use measures to reduce vehicle trips. There was uncertainty about its effectiveness; there may be a need to ask employers to take more responsibility. Different parking ratios may be appropriate for different types of business. Performance measures, such as modal split or percentage of multi-occupancy vehicles, were suggested. Targets may incentivize businesses. It may be necessary to involve developers and tenants in finding solutions.

Flexible hours can spread the peak traffic flow but may operate against carpooling. A large employer in Lexington uses shuttle vans from Alewife and has a significant number of employees who cycle to work. The Hayden Avenue area is well-served, but Hartwell Avenue is more problematic. Higher density development may encourage carpooling and shuttles.

On the question of whether demand management requirements deter developers, Richard Canale suggested that transparency and consistency in the requirements are more important than cost. Mitigation fees can be required as a condition of a special permit and can be used for infrastructure or transit access. If a planned development has to go to Town Meeting, mitigation fees can be part of the package. Anne Shapiro noted that a van shuttle to the railway station would have been beneficial in connection with a recently-approved Ch 40B housing development in West Concord, but the town did not require it. Lexington's Avalon development contributes to a shuttle to Alewife. The developers were initially reluctant, but have found it to be a marketing point.

#### Parking for Mass Transit

In West Concord, the MBTA controls station parking. The level of fees appears to affect

usage. There is a small resident-only section that is operated with season passes. Many people walk to the station. Parking by commuters on local streets is deterred by enforcement action. In Lincoln there is an MBTA lot and a free lot for residents. Some train commuters are believed to use the Mall parking; enforcement is the responsibility of the Mall management. Richard Canale reported that a study of parking at stations has shown that, although most towns perceive there to be a large amount of parking by “outsiders,” in most cases the majority are town residents. He agreed to supply copies of this data. **ACTION: Richard Canale**

Anne Shapiro mentioned European studies which have looked at managing pricing so that people will park at the nearest facility to home.

#### Shopping Centers and Strip Malls

The issue of parking at the front versus the rear of shops was discussed. Strip malls often have parking at the front for marketing reasons; motorists can see that it will be easy to park. This arrangement disadvantages walkers, and aesthetic arguments often favor placing shops closer to the road. However, there may be a dilemma as to which way the stores should face. Dorothy Steele reported on the successful redevelopment of Marshfield center with rear parking and walkways between buildings. Where there is a continuous lively street, it is natural for stores to face it. Stores may have additional rear access points, but they may sometimes raise a security/insurance issue.

On the subject of employee versus customer parking, it was noted that some employers pay or require their employees to park at a distance.

#### **8:45 PM HFAC REPORT/ HANGAR 24**

Mike Rosenberg reported that the FAA has issued a Draft Environmental Assessment on Hangar 24, with a finding of no significant impact. The FAA proposes to hold a meeting with consulting parties to the Section 106/ Section 4(f) Review on January 28<sup>th</sup>, followed by a comment period on a Memorandum of Agreement. HATS will need to consider its options at this stage and the Chairman suggested asking Marilyn Fennollosa if she would be prepared to attend the January meeting to assist with discussion. **ACTION:Chair**

Dorothy Steele advised that the current document can be viewed on Massport’s website under ‘Publications’.

Margaret Coppe reported that at the HFAC meeting, Massport was asked about the outlook for its federal funding. This year’s funding is believed to be secure but there may be a need to look at increasing income. HFAC invited the Hanscom Aerospace and Technology Museum Project to make a presentation. Sara Mattes reported that she and Nancy Nelson, Superintendent of Minuteman National Park, also met with the board of the museum project.

Ms. Steele reported that via HFAC, Massport has also shared information on studies of the East Ramp, including noise and emissions. She offered to send a further copy. She reported that Massport has decided to pursue development of the East Ramp and has asked the FAA for an exclusion for it. Full buildout has been quantified. Bedford reported that it has been examining the conservation issues. The Chairman suggested that HATS invite Conservation Commissions to report to a future meeting. **ACTION: Chair**

#### **9:00 PM UPDATE ON 128 CCC**

Jeanne Krieger gave an update on the Route 128 Central Corridor Coalition. Discussions are continuing on a multi-modal transportation center. A meeting with stakeholders is likely to be held in January.

### **9:10 PM UPDATE ON MAPC COUNCIL AND MAGIC**

Richard Canale reported that the MAPC Council approved a set of Implementation Strategies for the MetroFuture Plan. There are 13 strategies containing hundreds of recommendations, and there is also an executive summary. Priorities were voted upon and the top one was addressing the transportation maintenance shortfall. There was sympathy for a gas tax now that prices have fallen. The Implementation Plan will inform the work plan for MAPC staff as well legislative and lobbying activities. Comments can still be sent in and views can be expressed to towns' MAPC representatives.

Mike Rosenberg said that he now represents Bedford at MAPC and commented that although MetroFuture seems a little ungrounded in the face of a state budget crisis and a national economic meltdown, nevertheless transportation, zoning reform and economic development incentives may demand attention in the short term. Mr. Canale agreed to check the schedule and Committee members agreed to familiarize themselves with the Implementation Strategies.

**ACTION: HATS members**

The next MAGIC meeting will be in Lexington and will discuss the Green Communities Act and energy issues.

### **9:20 PM OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **MINUTES**

The committee voted to approve the minutes of the September and October meetings, and to approve the minutes of the November meeting subject to editorial changes supplied by Sara Mattes and Mike Rosenberg.

#### **CHAIRMANSHIP**

The Committee expressed its thanks to Sara Mattes as retiring Chair.

Anne Shapiro nominated Jeanne Krieger as the new Chair and Richard Canale seconded the nomination. Ms. Krieger was elected unanimously by the Committee.

It was agreed that meetings will continue to be held at the Lincoln Town Offices with minutes prepared by Mrs. Perry and recorded for television by Mr. Cunningham.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Submitted by Catherine Perry  
Approved January 22, 2009

## HANSCOM AREA TOWNS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING

Held at 7:30 PM on November 20, 2008

At Lincoln Town Offices

#### PRESENT:

Sara Mattes	Lincoln Board of Selectmen (Chair)
Jeanne Krieger	Lexington Board of Selectmen
Anne Shapiro	Concord Board of Selectmen
Mike Rosenberg	Bedford Board of Selectmen
Lisa Mustapich	Bedford Planning Board
Richard Canale	Lexington Planning Board
Robert Domnitz	Lincoln Planning Board
Margaret Coppe	Lexington HATS rep
Dorothy Steele	Massport/OGCA
Sara Arnold	Massport Hanscom
Kati Winchell	Save Our Heritage
Jack French	Lincoln Moderator
Ned Perry	Concord Moderator
Marge Battin	Lexington Moderator
Joan Bowen	Bedford League of Women Voters
Deb Mauger	Lexington LWV
Rick Reed	Bedford Town Manager
Susan Brooks	Lincoln Town Clerk
Andy Friedlich	Lexington TMMA
Edith Sandy	Lexington TMMA
Jack MacLean	Lincoln CHUG subcommittee
Lora Goldenberg	Bedford
Betsey Anderson	Bedford
Joe Rosen	Lincoln
Gordon Mitchell	Lincoln

#### 7:30 PM INTRODUCTION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda. She explained that the bulk of the meeting would be devoted to a workshop to discuss governance issues, focusing on Town Meetings. Lincoln's Cultural and Historic Resources (CHUG) subcommittee of its Comprehensive Long Range Plan Committee is eager to compare experiences.

#### 7:40 PM TOWN GOVERNANCE/TOWN MEETING WORKSHOP

Copies of an article entitled "Can Town Meeting be Saved?" from the North East Municipal Forum were distributed. A book by Joseph F. Zimmerman, "The New England Town Meeting: Democracy in Action", Praeger Press 1999, was recommended for further reading.

The Chairman asked each town to supply some basic statistics about their populations and Town Meeting attendance. It was noted that Lexington has a representative town meeting whereas the other three towns have open town meetings.

Information supplied was as follows:

<u>Town</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Voters</u>	<u>TM attendance</u>	<u>Length of TM</u>
Bedford	13,000	8,700	1 – 5%	2 evenings
Lincoln	5,600	3,800	5 – 10%	1 day
Concord	18,000	12,000	5 – 15%	3 – 6 evenings
Lexington	31,000	19,000 (189 TM Members)	c. 170 members	6 – 11 evenings

Bedford provided copies of its 2008 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Report and Lexington provided copies of its introductory handbook, “Town Meeting in Lexington”.

Discussion began with the question of whether Town Meeting is still a viable and effective form of government, followed by examination of a number of aspects of Town Meeting organization and support. A summary of points contributed by participants is as follows:

Viability and efficiency of Town Meeting

TM maximizes the spread of power and can encourage wide discussion. A representative TM can allow public to speak.

Lincoln is concerned about imbalance in the age of attendees (tilted towards the older end). Other towns report a mixture, depending somewhat on the issues. It may take newcomers a while to learn how TM operates; outreach efforts can help. Falmouth’s moderator has developed a school curriculum that may be of interest. Bedford’s moderator has contributed to school lessons, and the scouts help at TM.

Communication of issues prior to TM

Bedford’s colorful 2008 Warrant Report was produced by the Selectmen with the help of other committees and staff. The warrant report goes out to households about two weeks before TM and includes rules, guidelines for civil discourse, and procedure. The Finance Committee produces a separate Finance Report. Bedford also produces a Town newsletter quarterly.

Lexington supplies two newspaper articles – one about warrant articles and one about TM protocol. TM Member candidates host meetings. The TM handbook was produced by the League of Women Voters and Town Meeting Members’ Association. A warrant information report goes out to TM Members and is made available in the library and on websites in advance of TM, as well as the warrant itself. The TMMA has a listserve and places its archives on a website. Only a few Members write to it regularly. Other residents can post messages by invitation; past abuse problems have stopped it being open-access. The TMMA is not a deliberative body of town government. A few information nights are held on major topics prior to TM, and members have a bus tour to view significant sites. Members work hard on writing up the warrant information, trying to ensure neutrality.

### Roles of Leagues of Women Voters

Lexington's LWV holds a candidates night with break-out groups for precincts and a plenary session for town-wide issues. The League puts a set of questions to candidates and produces a voters' guide which has so far been published through the local newspaper. It aims to spread awareness of issues throughout the general population.

Bedford's LWV reported feeling challenged. It has experienced poor cooperation from its local newspaper and its resources are stretched. The LWV holds a candidates' night when there are contested elections. It produces a "Know your town" contacts book, has a website, and helped with the guide to TM. It is considering a Welcome Wagon outreach effort.

Concord's LWV has held a candidates' night even when elections were not contested, to raise awareness of issues. Occasionally it holds forums on major issues such as the Long Range Plan.

Lincoln does not currently have a LWV so more responsibility falls on the Selectmen.

Availability of volunteers is a general concern; younger women are more likely have careers than in the past and if they volunteer they are more likely to get involved with schools than town government. The average age of LWV members across the country was reported as 72.

### Roles of Moderators in outreach

Lincoln's Moderator used to hold a forum for town boards to discuss issues in advance of TM. This developed into the State of the Town Meeting, held in the fall and run by the Selectmen. Boards submit reports and a public discussion is held, often focusing on a particular theme. Documents are placed on the town's website and the meeting is broadcast via cable TV, as are Board of Selectmen's meetings.

In Lexington the Moderator attends precinct meetings and other meetings in the lead up to TM. He wrote a user friendly explanation of procedures and helps to educate new TM Members. In Lexington citizens also frequently sponsor TM articles.

Bedford and Concord's Moderators also reported helping citizens by reviewing their draft articles. Concord's outreach efforts have included TM training sessions, a booklet on procedures, a DVD, early mailing of the warrant booklet supplemented by a Finance Committee report, and broadcast of many meetings on cable TV. Most residents are alert to warrant articles.

Some Moderators also have powers of appointment over various committees. Some towns include a volunteer card in the warrant booklet and maintain a register.

### Consent calendars

In Lincoln, the Moderator decides which articles are placed on the consent calendar but anyone can remove them at TM. In Concord the Moderator similarly develops a list of articles that are unlikely to be controversial. Five people can take an item off.

### Staffing

Most towns have some assistance from staff in their Selectmen's/ Town Administrator's/ Town Manager's office. Lexington has a graduate intern. Lincoln only has three Selectmen whereas other towns have more.

### Articles and motions

Articles only need to set the scope of the subject matter. Detailed motions can be written and distributed prior to voting and passed “as written”. Some towns try to separate zoning articles from other matters.

### ‘In’ and ‘out’ crowds

Lincoln sometimes hears a perception that town government is controlled by an ‘in’ crowd. Other town’s representatives observed that many residents want to be able to voice their opinions directly to them, or to know that the town is well governed, but not to get involved beyond that.

### Contested races/ term limits

Contested races are generally patchy; incumbents are not always challenged but that may indicate satisfaction. Some towns have selectmen who have served three or four terms. Concord has a recommended maximum of two terms, or one for a five year board membership. A strong Town Manager position may help to maintain continuity. Lincoln is the only town that has a Town Administrator instead.

Bedford’s Personnel Board helps to fill committee positions. People tend to gain experience on committees before moving to positions on central boards.

### Electronic communications

Lincoln has just established an email notification system for town announcements, which may be refined to allow people to be more selective in what they receive. Lexington has several listserves, for the schools and interest groups. Also there is the ‘Lexington list’, a yahoo group with archives, which has largely been used for household contractor recommendations, and a spin-off group that discusses political and religious issues.

It was noted that anyone can start a blog but Sudbury had problems with unsigned allegations made in a blog begun by the newspaper.

The Chairman thanked participants for their contributions to the discussion and suggested that it could be continued in future if people were interested.

### **9:00 HFAC REPORT**

Mike Rosenberg attended the last meeting of the Hanscom Field Advisory Committee and reported that there has been a significant reduction in operations at the airfield. The next meeting will be on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

The Chairman wondered why there was little news about the museum proposal for Hangar 24. Massport’s representatives reported that John Silva, the FAA hearing officer, hopes to arrange a meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup> for consulting parties to the Section 106 Review.

**ACTION: Consulting parties to Hangar 24 review**

### **9:10 PM UPDATE ON 128 CENTRAL CORRIDOR COALITION**

Jeanne Krieger reported that the Coalition has continued to discuss traffic demand management. It has met with the MBTA concerning a new multi-modal transportation center and plans a further meeting. Legislative representatives are being briefed.



Richard Canale reported that he attended a rail corridor meeting, where the inner and outer communities appear to have different interests. There may be some economic stimulus funds becoming available.

### **9:15 PM HOUSING PRIVATIZATION CONTRACT AND BRAC**

The Chairman reviewed the fact that National Park staff alerted HATS to a proposal it had heard of to convert part of the military housing area to civilian use. The contract for the privatized housing construction was known to be in the course of renegotiation but this idea seemed to be a significant departure from previous intentions. Lincoln's Town Administrator has met with Colonel Orr in an effort to clarify the situation. The meeting confirmed that a proposal is under discussion for a portion of the housing to be civilian market housing, but the detail is not clear. The Chairman will ask Mr. Higgins if he can supply a summary of the conversation for HATS members. **ACTION: Chair**

Ms. Mattes recalled that during the last BRAC exercise, against a background of base consolidation, the towns made a point of showing that Hanscom had the capacity to accommodate additional uses within its secure boundaries. She commented that carving out an area for civilian use seems contrary to that approach. It could affect security and raise issues about use of federal land. She noted that the original intent of privatized construction was not to sell housing for profit, and considered the lack of transparency troubling.

It was agreed that the Chairman will draft a letter to Senator Kennedy and Governor Patrick and circulate it to the HATS Selectmen.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

The Chairman reported that the search for a Cyber Command center is believed to be off the table for now.

Mike Rosenberg reported that MAPC has signed the contract for the Battle Road scenic byway study. Towns will need to appoint two representatives each for the Steering Committee - possibly one staff person and one elected representative. MAPC's role is to provide data and coordinate people.

There will be a MAGIC legislative breakfast on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### HATS Schedule

The next HATS meeting will be on December 18<sup>th</sup>, when the main discussion item will be parking. Planning boards and their staff will be invited. Jeanne Krieger agreed to coordinate arrangements for the meeting. **ACTION: Jeanne Krieger**

The following meeting will be on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the main topic will be activities for young people. Mike Rosenberg will coordinate the planning.

**ACTION: Mike Rosenberg**

### Minutes

There appeared to have been a problem with distribution of the September and October minutes due to blocking of email attachments from the Chairman. Mrs. Perry agreed to re-send the minutes to HATS Selectmen and Planning Board representatives.

**ACTION: Catherine Perry**

Approved minutes are being posted on Lincoln's website, [www.lincolntown.org](http://www.lincolntown.org), where HATS can be found under Boards and Commissions.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Submitted by Catherine Perry  
Approved as amended, December 18, 2008